

CORRECTIONAL SERVICE CANADA

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Redirecting Structured Intervention Unit (SIU) Authorizations: Trends in Five-Day Decision-Making

Background

Structured Intervention Units (SIUs) were incorporated into the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) on November 30th, 2019. As per section 34.1 of the [Corrections and Conditional Release Act \(CCRA\)](#), SIUs are intended to provide intervention-based accommodation to individuals whose placement in a mainstream unit would interfere with the safety of others or security of the institution (34.1 A), the individual's own safety (34.1 B), or the integrity of an investigation (34.1 C). Following initial authorization to an SIU, reasonable alternatives¹ are to be explored in advance of the Institutional Head's decision to approve or not approve the authorization within five working days ("five-day decision")².

The current analysis examines the relative prevalence of cases in which the SIU authorization corresponded with a decision to end the stay within a five-day period. Drawing on a dataset of SIU authorizations between November 30th, 2019, and March 31st, 2025, patterns in five-day decisions were explored, including trends over time and across regions, with a comparison between SIU sites and Restricted Movement (RM) sites³.

Trends in Five-Day Decisions

Approximately half of all SIU authorizations since November 30th, 2019, have corresponded with a decision to end the authorization within five days. The national percentage across fiscal years has fluctuated moderately (between 43% and 53%; see Table 1). Decisions to end the SIU authorization do not necessarily correspond with an actual movement out of the SIU (i.e., due to refusals to leave the SIU). However, the discrepancy between decisions and actual movement out of the SIU has narrowed over time. In fiscal year (FY) 2024 to 2025, around 93% of five-day decisions to end the authorization corresponded with actual movement out of the SIU. At the same time, median stay length for the small group who remained in the SIU following the decision to end the authorization increased (i.e., 48 days in FY 2024 to 2025). This is likely due to the complexity in remaining cases where movement out is not actualized, which may also contribute to longer stay length.

Patterns in five-day decisions varied by institution type. RM sites were considerably more likely to have a decision to end the stay (e.g., in FY 2024 to 2025, around 74%, contrasted with around 31% at SIU sites).⁴ Over time, there has been a decrease in the percentage of cases with a five day decision to end the stay at SIU sites, but an increase at RM sites. There has also been an increase in the percentage of SIU authorizations commencing at RM sites rather than SIU sites (i.e., from around 16% in FY 2020 to 2021 to 38% in 2024-2025; see Table 2). This increase is likely a factor in the overall narrowing discrepancy between five-day decisions to end the SIU stay and actual movement out.

Outcomes of five-day decisions are also subject to considerable regional variation. For example, in FY 2024 to 2025, SIU authorizations corresponding with a five-day decision to end the stay accounted for around: 48% of cases in the Atlantic region;

¹ As per [Guidelines 711-1](#), a reasonable alternative is "an actionable alternative that has been identified after completion of a thorough assessment of the inmate's individual profile, risk factors, culturally appropriate and restorative options, institutional adjustment, and programming, and in consideration of any comments made by the inmate regarding the proposed alternative."

² In accordance with [Section 1 \(2\)1](#) of the *CCRA*, "working day means a day on which offices of the federal public administration are generally open in the province in question."

³ Not all institutions have an SIU. SIUs are located at nine men's institutions (maximum security institutions and multi-level institutions) and all five women's multi-level institutions. Individuals who are incarcerated at a non-SIU site who have been authorized to an SIU can be subject to Restricted Movement (RM) for up to five working days. See: [Commissioner's Directive 711](#).

⁴ Differences for RM sites might be related to population differences between RM and SIU sites, as SIUs are concentrated at maximum security institutions and multi-level institutions with maximum security units, where institutional dynamics tend to be more complex.

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55% in the Quebec region; 58% in the Ontario region; 25% in the Prairie region; and 34% in the Pacific region. Regional variation is also evident in the relative prevalence of SIU authorizations at SIU versus non-SIU (RM) sites.

What it means

The five-day review period presents an opportunity for decision-makers to identify reasonable alternatives to the SIU. Over the past six fiscal years, decisions to end an SIU authorization within five days have increasingly corresponded with actual movement out of the SIU (over 90% of cases in the most recent fiscal year). This suggests an increase in the efficacy of efforts to identify reasonable alternatives to redirect individuals from the SIU to mainstream options. Overall trends are influenced by an increase in the number of cases commencing at non-SIU (RM) sites relative to SIU sites, which are subject to regional variation.

Table 1. SIU Decisions, FY 2019 to 2020 to FY 2024 to 2025, for SIU and RM Sites

SIU / RM Information	Fiscal Year 2019 to 2020*	Fiscal Year 2020 to 2021	Fiscal Year 2021 to 2022	Fiscal Year 2022 to 2023	Fiscal Year 2023 to 2024	Fiscal Year 2024 to 2025
Total for All Institutions	949	2262	1432	2073	2886	2786
Decision to end SIU authorization within 5 working days in all institutions	425 (44.8%)	1201 (53.1%)	614 (42.9%)	1045 (50.4%)	1509 (52.3%)	1318 (47.3%)
Actual movement out within 5 working days in all institutions	341 (80.2%)	967 (80.5%)	470 (76.5%)	868 (83.1%)	1308 (86.7%)	1225 (92.9%)
Remained in SIU > 5 working days* in all institutions	84 (19.8%)	234 (19.5%)	144 (23.5%)	177 (16.9%)	201 (13.3%)	93 (7.1%)
*Median SIU days in all institutions	40.5	35.5	41.0	41.0	42.0	48.0
Commenced at SIU Site	790	1896	1158	1450	1840	1718
Decision to end SIU authorization within 5 working days	333 (42.2%)	930 (49.1%)	405 (35.0%)	593 (40.9%)	711 (38.6%)	531 (30.9%)
Actual movement out within 5 working days	261 (78.4%)	703 (75.6%)	264 (65.2%)	418 (70.5%)	511 (71.9%)	438 (82.5%)
Commenced at RM Site	159	366	274	623	1046	1068
Decision to end SIU authorization within 5 working days	92 (57.9%)	271 (74.0%)	209 (76.3%)	452 (72.6%)	798 (76.3%)	787 (73.7%)
Actual movement out within 5 working days	80 (87.0%)	264 (97.4%)	206 (98.6%)	450 (99.6%)	797 (99.9%)	787 (100.0%)

*Information for FY 2019 to 2020 reflects the period of November 30th, 2019 (date of SIU implementation) to March 31st, 2020.

CORRECTIONAL SERVICE CANADA

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Table 2. SIU Authorizations, FY 2019 to 2020 to FY 2024 to 2025

SIU / RM Information	Fiscal Year 2019 to 2020*	Fiscal Year 2020 to 2021	Fiscal Year 2021 to 2022	Fiscal Year 2022 to 2023	Fiscal Year 2023 to 2024	Fiscal Year 2024 to 2025
Commenced at SIU Site	790 (83%)	1896 (84%)	1158 (81%)	1450 (70%)	1840 (64%)	1718 (62%)
Commenced at RM Site	159 (17%)	366 (16%)	274 (19%)	623 (30%)	1046 (36%)	1068 (38%)
Total	949	2262	1432	2073	2886	2786

Table 3. SIU Decisions, 2019-2020 to 2024-2025, by Region

Region	Fiscal Year 2019 to 2020*	Fiscal Year 2020 to 2021	Fiscal Year 2021 to 2022	Fiscal Year 2022 to 2023	Fiscal Year 2023 to 2024	Fiscal Year 2024 to 2025
% Commenced at SIU Site (Atlantic Region)	76%	65%	51%	58%	70%	74%
Decision to end SIU authorization within 5 working days (all sites in the Atlantic region)	72 (50.7%)	222 (68.1%)	160 (70.2%)	215 (75.7%)	224 (73.9%)	130 (48.1%)
% Commenced at SIU Site (Quebec Region)	86%	89%	83%	81%	71%	67%
Decision to end SIU authorization within 5 working days (all sites in the Quebec Region)	192 (56.6%)	540 (65.5%)	202 (53.0%)	439 (69.6%)	614 (62.4%)	526 (55.4%)
% Commenced at SIU Site (Ontario and Nunavut Region)	55%	57%	64%	34%	29%	28%
Decision to end SIU authorization within 5 working days (all sites in the Ontario and Nunavut Region)	28 (30.4%)	111 (45.7%)	64 (33.5%)	207 (45.8%)	410 (55.9%)	429 (58.0%)
% Commenced at SIU Site (Prairie Region)	91%	95%	97%	98%	92%	89%
Decision to end SIU authorization within 5 working days (all sites in the Prairie Region)	49 (21.7%)	119 (23.2%)	91 (20.4%)	97 (21.0%)	152 (26.2%)	141 (25.4%)
% Commenced at SIU Site (Pacific Region)	89%	92%	90%	70%	67%	65%
Decision to end SIU authorization within 5 working days (all sites in the Pacific Region)	84 (56.0%)	209 (58.9%)	97 (52.4%)	87 (35.8%)	109 (38.1%)	92 (33.9%)

*Information for 2019-2020 reflects the period of November 30th, 2019, (date of SIU implementation) to March 31st, 2020.

For more information

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